

### **REMARKS**

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Goldberg for the courtesy extended in a telephone call made on July 23, 2008 with Applicants' representative to clarify the nature of the July 21, 2008 Office Action. Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The July 21, 2008 Office Action indicates that claims 18-31 newly submitted in the Office Action dated November 29, 2007 are directed to patentably distinct species with mutually exclusive subject matter from the previously presented claims. The Office Action goes on asserts that "[i]n addition, these species are not obvious variants of each other based on the current record." The Office Action indicates that claims 18-31 are withdrawn.

In response, Applicants believe that added claims 18-31 are not directed to patentably distinct species from cancelled claims 1-17. For example, added independent claim 18 recites as follows:

18. A printing method for printing an image by using a print head, wherein the print head has a plurality of chips deviated from each other in a column direction, each of the chips have a plurality of print elements aligned in the column direction, the plurality of print elements in each of the chips are divided into a plurality of groups, the print elements in each of the groups are allocated to a plurality of drive blocks corresponding to a plurality of time-division drive blocks, part of the print elements in the chips adjoining each other in the column direction are overlapped in a scan direction that crosses the column direction, the number of the overlapping print elements is equal in number to an integer times the number of the print elements constituting the group, the printing method comprising the steps of:

moving the print head and a print medium relative to each other in the scan direction; and driving, while the print head and the print medium are relatively moved, the plurality of print elements in the print head on a time-division basis so that the print elements belonging to the same drive block have the same drive timing and the print elements belonging to a different drive block have different drive timings to print the image on the print medium.

In comparison, canceled independent claim 1 as amended in the August 13, 2007

Amendment recites as follows:

In reply to Office Action dated July 21, 2008

1. A printing method for forming an image by using a print head, wherein the print head has a plurality of arrayed chips, the chips each have a plurality of print elements arranged in a column direction, the plurality of print elements are divided in a number of time-division drive blocks, the plurality of print elements include first print elements and at least two second print elements situated near end of the chips in relation to the first print elements, and the chips are arranged so that the second print elements in adjoining chips are aligned in a scan direction with printing positions which overlap in the scan direction,

wherein the chips are arranged so that the first print elements in adjoining chips are not aligned in the scan direction,

number of second print elements is equal in number to an integer times the number of drive blocks,

the printing method comprising the steps of:

moving the print head and a print medium relative to each other in the scan direction that crosses the column direction; and

dividing the first print elements into a plurality of drive blocks and activating the drive blocks of the first print elements on a time-division basis to form an image on the print medium,

wherein drive timings with which to activate the second print elements have the same time-division drive timing, and the second print elements overlapping with each other in the scan direction are selectively activated so as to be alternatively actuated depending on a column position in the scan direction.

Applicants note that each of added independent claims 22 and 26 is an apparatus claim and a program claim, respectively, that mirrors claim 18. Applicants also note that added independent claims 26, 28 and 30 recite similar features to claim 18 described above.

Applicants believe that while added claims 18-31 further clarify the present invention, they are directed to the similar species (e.g., a printing method for printing an image by using a print head) and recite similar features to canceled claims, i.e., the added claims are NOT directed to patentably distinct species with mutually exclusive subject matter from the canceled claims.

For example, claim 18 recites, *inter alia*, "the print head has a plurality of chips deviated from each other in a column direction, each of the chips have a plurality of print elements aligned in the column direction, the plurality of print elements in each of the chips are divided into a plurality of groups, the print elements in each of the groups are allocated to a plurality of drive blocks corresponding to a plurality of time-division drive blocks..." In contrast, canceled claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, " the chips each have a plurality of print elements arranged in a

column direction, the plurality of print elements are divided in a number of time-division drive blocks..."

Furthermore, claim 18 recites "moving the print head and a print medium relative to each other in the scan direction; and driving, while the print head and the print medium are relatively moved, the plurality of print elements in the print head on a time-division basis so that the print elements belonging to the same drive block have the same drive timing and the print elements belonging to a different drive block have different drive timings to print the image on the print medium." In contrast, canceled claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "moving the print head and a print medium relative to each other in the scan direction that crosses the column direction; and dividing the first print elements into a plurality of drive blocks and activating the drive blocks of the first print elements on a time-division basis to form an image on the print medium, wherein drive timings with which to activate the second print elements have the same time-division drive timing, and the second print elements overlapping with each other in the scan direction are selectively activated so as to be alternatively actuated depending on a column position in the scan direction."

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the Election/Restrictions indicated in the July 21, 2008 Office Action be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicants submit herewith claims 18-31 as new pending claims.

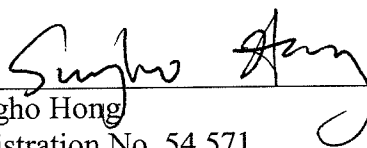
**AUTHORIZATION**

No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-5326). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Dated: August 20, 2008

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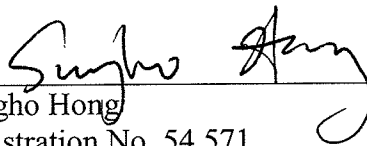
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